

Reading strategies and their relationship with reading comprehension. Proposal from elementary school

Estrategias de lectura y su relación con la comprensión lectora. Propuesta desde la educación primaria

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Abstract

The present research work proposes and designs reading strategies, the aim is to use a qualitative research approach and an action research methodological perspective to intervene and transform the reading comprehension situation of primary school pupils. The results express a relevant and significant relationship between the use of reading strategies and modalities and the improvement of reading comprehension.

Resumen

El presente trabajo de investigación propone y diseña estrategias de lectura, la finalidad es que mediante un enfoque de investigación cualitativa y con una perspectiva metodológica de investigación acción se logre intervenir y transformar la situación de comprensión lectora de alumnos de educación primaria. Los resultados expresan una relación pertinente y significativa entre el uso de estrategias y modalidades de lectura y el mejoramiento de la comprensión lectora.

Objective	Results	Contributions
Strategy design Application Reading comprehension	Literal understanding Inferential understanding	Relationship between improvement in strategy design, implementation and reading comprehension

Objetivo	Resultados	Contribuciones
Diseño de estrategias Aplicación Comprensión lectora	Comprensión literal Comprensión inferencial	Relación entre mejora en el diseño de estrategias, su aplicación y la comprensión lectora en estudio

Reading strategies, Reading modalities, Reading comprehension

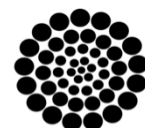
Estrategias de lectura, Modalidades de lectura, Comprensión lectora

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Introduction

Reading comprehension, defined by the OECD (OECD, 2024) as "the ability to understand, evaluate, use and engage with written texts, participate in society, achieve proposed goals and develop the greatest possible knowledge and potential", is a transcendent educational aspect in the expectations of educational improvement in Mexico and the globalised world that seeks, according to the National Reading Strategy of the New Mexican School, to "recover the pleasure of reading, promoting the dissemination and consumption of Mexican and global books. Participate in the construction of peace, creating new spaces for coexistence through the dialogue that reading generates" (GobMex, 2024)

Given the current positions and the importance of reading comprehension in educational systems, this research proposes an intervention proposal that allows for the generation of strategies to achieve a better diagnosis, planning and intervention in primary education groups on reading comprehension.

Diagnostic

The research was developed in a 3rd grade group of the primary school "María Guadalupe Castorena de Belaunzarán" in the municipality of Ojocaliente, Zacatecas.

One of the important characteristics for the characterisation of an object of study through its delimitation in the approach of a diagnosis and that will result in the design of relevant intervention strategies, is undoubtedly the recognition of learning styles that are defined by (Mejía, 2024) as:

Kinesthetic learning refers to people who learn best through direct experience and active participation [...] Visual learners, as the name suggests, understand information best when it is presented visually [...] Auditory learning refers to those who retain information most effectively when they hear it.

The identification of the different types of learning was carried out by means of a test that consisted of 10 questions focused on tastes based on certain activities or situations. This test was carried out individually, for which they were given a sheet of paper with the 10 questions to be answered in a time limit of 20 minutes.

Box 1

Tabla 1

Síntesis de los estilos de aprendizaje

Learning style	Number of pupils presenting the learning style
Auditory	7
Visual	12
Kinaesthetic	3
Auditory-Visual	5
Auditory-Kinesthetic	1
Visual-Kinaesthetic	0
Auditory-Visual-Kinaesthetic	1

Source: Own elaboration

The above table shows that the predominant learning style in the study group is visual with 12 students and secondly auditory.

Diagnosis of reading comprehension

Reading is essential in everyday life because it is the key to knowing and interacting with the social world, it is a guideline for the emergence of the imagination. However, for reading to make sense, a fundamental ingredient is required: reading comprehension, which allows access to the construction of concepts through the decoding of texts carried out with a balance between previous knowledge and the information provided by the text.

It is worth noting that the lack of comprehension is one of the most worrying problems in primary schools, because without this competence, it is difficult to acquire new knowledge. In this respect, in order to identify the levels of comprehension in the study group, the analysis of a diagnostic strategy is presented, which rescues information that specifies the level of reading comprehension of the group, and on the other hand, a questionnaire was applied to assess the levels of comprehension, making it possible to identify which are more favoured in the group.

In the reading, the prediction strategy was applied, for which the cover was shown (sampling strategy) where Choco (the main character of the story) was found and questions were asked as shown below:

Ma: Here is this little bird called Choco, how do you think he goes (the dialogue was interrupted).

Ao: Choco

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Article

Ma: Choco like choco milk (laughs) What do you think his family is like?

Raising hand

/A student raised his hand/

Ma: Let's see tell us

Ao: Colourful

Ma: Colourful What colour do you think Choco's family is?

Aos: Yellow

Aos: Colourful

Aos: Yellow with blue

Ao: Like the chicks (Diagnostic session)

In response to the trigger question What colour do you think Choco's family will be? answers were obtained that said it would be yellow through the relationship that the pupils made with the image shown and their prior knowledge, because although it is true that reading comprehension requires the use of what the pupils know, and in this case not only did they show what they know about what birds (in this case Choco's family) may be like, but they also showed that they can use their prior knowledge to make predictions. It should be noted that their predictions are limited to what they observe and not to other things they imagine or want the text to be about. In view of this, it is necessary to further develop the ability to make predictions, because although experts highlight its importance because 'it is to anticipate the contents of the text, to formulate hypotheses about the development and end of what is narrated. The reader is able to make predictions when he/she links the sampling with the information provided by the text'.

Another important thing to highlight is their ability to make analogies with what is in their context, as this was manifested when making a comparison of the colour of Choco's family with the colour of the chicks.

Another reading that was considered for the diagnosis was the story 'Secretos de familia' by the author Isol, so didactic memory was used to ask if they remembered the name of the author, because recovering the name of the author is part of the attention paid to the reading, and although they did not immediately answer the name, when they said the word -puercoespín- (text that was read previously), they demonstrated that they had understood the content of the story.

They showed that they understood the content of the story, although they did not understand the name of the author, with the exception of one student, which shows that most of the students retain more information from the text than from the paratextual data of the text, identifying also that they lack more knowledge about authors of different texts or stories, as was the case in this case.

Ma: The story is called: 'Choco finds a mother', the author is Keiko Kasza. Do you remember the name of the author of the story I read you yesterday?

Aos: No

Ao: 'The Porcupine'.

Ma: The Porcupine

Aa: Isol

Ma: Isol, very good. Yesterday I read you a story by Isol and now I am going to read you a story by Keiko Kasza (Diagnostic session).

Afterwards, we started the reading in shared mode and with dramatisation, which was effective in getting the students' attention, as the focus on dramatisation drew everyone into the story.

During this, another general and interesting aspect appeared in the children, and that is the fact that they empathise with the characters and can discover the feelings in the story, because that is what reading leads us to, to recognise and express emotions. After some pauses in which the prediction strategy was used, the evidence shows that they are limited and focused on their immediate context.

/When reading about how two little animals were not Choco's mummy, the children expressed some emotions/

Ao: Poor thing

Ma: Choco with Mrs. penguin

Ao: It's a good thing that story doesn't exist because I would feel bad.

Almost at the end of the reading, they were shown the image of Mrs. Bear's children and, noticing that they were different from her, they applied the strategy of inference, determining that Choco would be the new son. This strategy is 'by which one infers what is not clearly expressed in a text' (Quiñónez & Echeverría, 2012, p. 13).

It is true that the text did not mention that Choco would be Mrs. Oso's new son, but, although it is not in the text, the image allowed them to determine it, because they understood that Choco was different from Mrs. Oso, but he does not necessarily have to be the same in order to be mother and son. This identified that the inferential level of reading comprehension is present in the group.

/The pupils inferred that Choco would be the new son by looking at the image of Mrs. Bear's children

Aa: And now Choco is going to be the new son.

Ma: Yes?

Aa: A little bird

Similarly, in the text the word 'adoptive mother' was not specified, so, according to what they understood from the story, they made another inference by mentioning that concept.

Finally, the reading was concluded with the correction and self-correction of their hypotheses, likewise, a space was opened for comments where the critical level was manifested through subjective, deep comments, related to their lives and how families can be different, for this they made analogies about what they observe in their reality, this means that despite the example given in the story referred to the differences for being different animals, some students commented on their experiences regarding their experiences in their context such as differences in skin colour, distinction in hair, etc. The critical level is important because it allows students to relate what they read to their way of thinking about life, because 'the student is immersed in a reality of experiences that, as a person, affects him directly or indirectly'.

Aa: But he found his mum

Ma: He found her

Ao: She was a foster mother

Ma: Not always What can we reflect on this? That not always mothers...

Aa: Are the same

Ma: Or are they?

Ao: No

Aa: Because children can be, some children can be, their mum is like a little brown and the child is white

Ma: That can happen too

Aa: Teacher, for example, my mum is Chinese and I'm straight, straight.

Ma: You see, that can happen, my mum is short and I'm taller than her (diagnostic session).

Write in order the names of the animals that appeared in the story; 2. What was Mrs. Bear doing when she met Choco; 3. How did Choco feel at the beginning of the story; 4. How did Choco feel at the end of the story; 5. What would you have done to get a mother for Choco; 6. Why is Mrs. Bear now Choco's mother? Of these, only one question focused on each level will be analysed using two pieces of evidence to make a comparison of the complexity of the answers.

Literal Level

This level is analysed with the answers to question 2 (What was Mrs. Bear doing when she met Choco?). At this level the reader 'has the ability to recognise and remember explicit information and scenes as they appear in the text. This allows him/her to find the main and secondary ideas, [...]'. The secondary idea that the students had to identify was explicit in the text because Mrs. Bear was -picking apples-.

Figure 1 shows that the pupil has the appropriate literal level because she extracted the information exactly as it appears in the text. On the other hand, Figure 2 shows that the learner did not extract the information exactly as it appears in the text.

Box 2

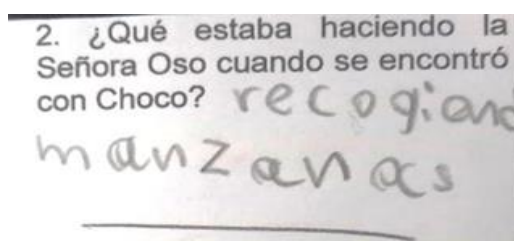


Figure 1

Evidence 1. Literal Level

Source: Own elaboration

Box 3

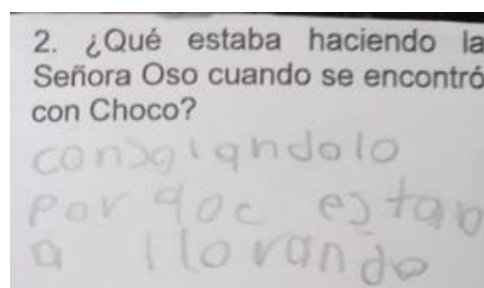


Figure 2

Evidence 2. Literal Level

Source: Own elaboration

Level of reorganisation

The reorganisation of information is analysed by means of prompt 1 (write in order the names of the animals that appeared in the story). Its function is to 'make classifications to categorise people, objects, places and others; sketches to reproduce the text in a schematic way; synthesis to summarise different ideas, facts and others'. In this case, a classification of the characters was requested by the order in which they appeared in the story.

In the following evidences there is a notorious difference both in the amount of characters that appear and in the order; in Figure 3 there is a smaller amount of animals compared to Figure 4, but in spite of this, the pupil who did what is shown in Figure 3 has more developed this level because he placed the characters in the correct order (Choco, giraffe, penguin, walrus, Mrs. bear and Mrs. bear's children). On the other hand, Figure 4 shows that the pupil does have the capacity to retain information, but not to remember the sequence of events, which is why she placed them in the wrong order.

Box 4

1. Escribe en orden los nombres de los animales que aparecieron en la historia.

Choco
Jirafa
Pingvino
morsa
y la señora oso

Figure 3

Evidence 1. Reorganisation level

Source: Own elaboration

Box 5

1. Escribe en orden los nombres de los animales que aparecieron en la historia.

Jirafa
Pingvino
choco
Cocodilito
Cachibito
osita
hipopotamo

Figure 4

Evidence 2. Reorganisation Level

Source: Own elaboration

Inferential Level

When this level is reached, students "reconstruct the meaning of the text by relating it to their personal experiences and previous knowledge, from which they formulate conjectures and hypotheses and draw conclusions" (Guerrero Hernández, 2024). In order to identify how students' inferences are presented, the evidence of question 4 (how did Choco feel at the end of the story?)

Box 6

4. ¿Cómo se sintió Choco al final de cuento?

feliz

Figure 5

Evidence 1. Inferential Level

Source: Own elaboration

Box 7

4. ¿Cómo se sintió Choco al final de cuento?

feliz porque encontro una mamá que lo quiere

Figure 6

Evidence 2. Inferential Level

Source: Own elaboration

Here, in both evidences the inferential level was presented because the two students determined Choco's emotional state, although one is more advanced because in Figure 6 the argument of such inference is even presented mentioning that Choco felt happy at the end of the story because he found a mother who loves him, and in evidence 5 not, only the answer "happy" was placed. Both answers are a conclusion of Choco's feelings at the end of the story.

Critical level

This is one of the most difficult levels to reach because "it acquires an evaluative character, since the reader, in addition to confronting the meaning of the text with his or her experiences and previous information, issues judgments and opinions based on which he or she accepts or rejects what is stated by the author" (Guerrero Hernández, 2024).

To reflect on what was found in the students, it is necessary to highlight that most of the answers were based only on "helping Choco" in question 5 (what would they have done to get a mother for Choco?) and there was a lack of greater depth in their comments. On the other hand, it is necessary to highlight that within this level there are some ideas that are more complex than others, such as the following two:

Box 8

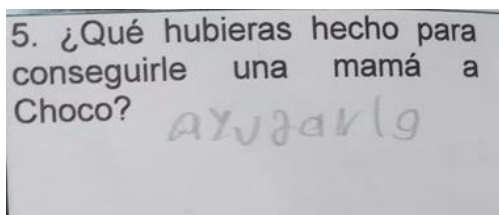


Figure 7

Evidence 1. Critical Level

Source: Own elaboration

Box 9

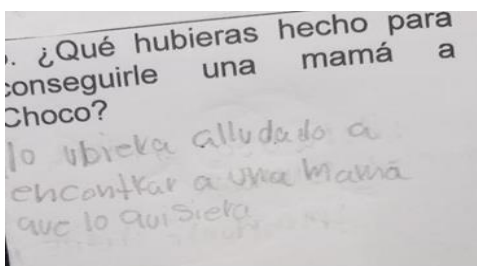


Figure 8

Evidence 2. Critical Level

Source: Own elaboration

In Figure 8, more critical ideas were presented about what the mother who would have got him with regard to Choco's interests should be like, i.e. she gave him the quality of showing appreciation for Choco by asking in the text for 'a mother who would love him'.

Theoretical framework

The world revolves between letters, between forms of communication and expression for the satisfaction of needs, because, what reading represents is a way of life, it is a way of seeing the world and acting in it. While it is true that a process is required for the acquisition of reading comprehension that begins at an early age, the teacher's mission is to favour this ability. But the way to achieve this is not simple, because problems arise that require their respective treatment through the implementation of proposals.

The present research is guided by two variables; the first focuses on reading comprehension in third grade students, which means that children who are practically in the middle of primary education present this situation, which can generate barriers for the acquisition of new knowledge. Understanding a text requires a process where different levels are passed to reach the critical level, but what does it refer to, this emphasises the implementation of strategies to discover the message and do something with it. In view of this, a treatment is required to favour the achievement of the learning that remains to be acquired in the following grades, and it is here where the variable of the intervention proposal on the analysis of stories with different modalities (annotated) and with reading strategies (prediction and inference) becomes present.

Reading comprehension

Looking through the eyes of a child helps us to realise how they see the world and to have the tools to make their learning possible. It should be noted that reading comprehension plays an important role in the acquisition of new knowledge, because it favours the ability to determine ideas, remember, recognise sequences of facts and infer or think with meaning, among other things. The need to get this right in primary schools becomes a situation that afflicts most teachers, because it is the magic of reading, it is the introduction to new worlds through the use of previous knowledge for the acquisition of new ones, adventures through the stories of the texts and above all an enjoyment during the action, understanding new ideas and growing both intellectually and in communication.

According to Solé (1999), cited by (Gamboa, 2017, p. 6) defines it as 'a process of constructing meanings about the text we intend to understand', in other words, it is to create a sense of life by constantly decoding texts day by day.

This perspective has also been addressed by (Torres & Granados, 2014) who argue reading comprehension as a process where different levels of information processing arise through the interference of 4 cognitive processes.

In this sense, the authors explain the attentional cognitive process as the one that allows the selection of useful information, on the other hand, the perceptual ones as producers of visual and auditory discrimination behaviours to gather textual information. As for memory processes, these allow for the temporary manipulation of the necessary information in order to make meaning. And finally, phonological awareness processes help to manipulate speech sounds simultaneously with the recognition and management of phonological units (syllables and phonemes).

The above helps to process information, which is why similarity is found with the subject of this research work, by establishing the analysis of these processes to find out what goes on in the minds of third grade children and how they manifest themselves to determine where to start from. However, when decoding texts, obstacles arise which, according to (Torres & Granados, 2014, p. 454) ‘knowledge of the difficulties in reading comprehension at the school stage will allow us to establish the bases so that at this stage the development of the precursors of reading can be favoured’.

In a complementary manner, Catalá (2001) cited by (Ramírez & Fernández, 2022, p. 491) points out that reading comprehension:

It is a process of convergence of assimilative-comprehensive and expressive communicative aspects, which is why the reader is the protagonist in this process, when he/she employs his/her knowledge about the world around him/her, transforms it while interacting with information sources and other people, and, subsequently, is able to communicate his/her experience verbally or in writing.

The inferential ‘in addition to the experiences and previous knowledge of the reader, his or her personal abilities to generate hypotheses are manifested’ (Ramírez & Fernández, 2022, p. 492) and the critical ‘in which the reader is able to make a value judgement about the text read’ (Ramírez & Fernández, 2022, p. 492). For the research work being developed, these will be approached with the addition of the reorganisational level, as it allows characterising the ways of reading and distinguishing the students' weaknesses.

Stories as a strategy for the achievement of reading comprehension

There are a series of resources used by teachers and researchers to deal with problems based on their needs; among the most widely used in teaching have been strategies that allow students to do something meaningful with the information in the text. Referring to the intervention proposal of this research work, emphasis is placed on the use of strategies and modalities as the main tool to be able to interpret texts and construct meanings, since the former are activities that we carry out while reading, and the latter are the ways of reading to vary in voice and face inflection, readers' voices, etc., depending on the stated purposes.

(Pernía & Méndez, 2018) have observed that in everyday school work, teachers' pedagogical planning lacks reading strategies oriented to the comprehension of texts; the application of reproductive activities such as: dictation, copying the text, memorisation and repetition comes into the picture. [Consequently, teachers show greater interest in teaching the pronunciation of words, intonations, and the construction of meanings is ignored. Given the above approach, it is necessary to emphasize that the work of promoting the construction of meaning falls mainly on teachers, who with only the application of reproductive activities have not achieved effectiveness in reading comprehension, which is why it is necessary to know some of the reasons why the problem arises and build feasible solution strategies, (Pernía & Méndez, 2018) propose to build a sense of reading through strategies, which are conceptualized as ‘are actions that are actively performed by the reader, before, during and after reading’ (p. 109).

With the implementation of appropriate strategies, it is possible to build a level of comprehension that allows inferences and predictions (Pernía & Méndez, 2018) argue that inference is achieved when the reader is the one who reconstructs the meaning of the text from the data that he/she finds with his/her previous information. On prediction, Solé (1992), cited by (Pernía & Méndez, 2018, p. 110) mention that it is:

Establishing adjusted and reasonable hypotheses about what is going to be found in the text, relying on the interpretation that is being built on what has already been read and on the reader's knowledge and experience.

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For the achievement of the competences of inferring and predicting in reading, prior knowledge is of great relevance, as (Pernía & Méndez, 2018, p. 104) argue with the statement by Solé (1922), who says that the most important thing 'is to know what is necessary to know more from the text'.

With what has been argued so far, the importance of these reading strategies is highlighted, since the proposed solution of the present research is oriented on them, with the addition of sampling, since it is required prior to the prediction with the use of stories as narrative text. Likewise, the activation of previous knowledge during the application of these strategies is contemplated in order to improve the teaching work in the development of reading skills.

On the relevance of the use of stories as a text that allows the development of strategies conducive to the achievement of reading comprehension, (Peña, 2019) mentions that the types of text that children enjoy reading the most are dramatic literary and narrative literary, 'it can be inferred that students are attracted to texts that are more meaningful and functional for their communicative and social needs' (Peña, 2019, pp. 46-47).

Methodology

The improvement of education is extremely important for the advancement of society, but for those in charge of being a guide in the development of this process, that is, teachers, to carry out an improvement plan, it is required to employ action research, but why, what does this type of research refer to; this refers to the study of a social situation and the use of strategies to broaden the understanding of the different problems of the action. In order to do this, reflection on the action is first required and then a route is taken to modify the practice.

This concept can be synthesised with what is explained by Lomax (1990) cited by (Latorre, 2005), who defines it as 'an intervention in professional practice with the intention of bringing about an improvement' (p. 24). Lewin's triangle (1980) is also cited there, where the link between research, action and training is highlighted, which are materialised in cycles of action and reflection, i.e., as strategies are applied, they are evaluated and evolve to intervene with another cycle of action until improvements are obtained.

With the contribution of different authors, the concept is complemented by defining action research as 'a practical enquiry carried out by teachers, in a collaborative manner, with the aim of improving their educational practice through cycles of action and reflection' (Latorre, 2005, p. 24).

Among the characteristics that define this type of research are those determined by Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) cited by (Latorre, 2005, p. 25).

It is mainly mentioned that it is participatory because the objective is to improve practices and to do so, people who work on it are involved following an introspective spiral, this means that a series of cycles are carried out where what is going to be done is planned, the actions are executed, observed and finally reflected upon, but it should be noted that this is not the end of the research, but the end of a cycle, because from the reflection following the objective of improvement, another cycle is proposed again with the same steps but evolved, thus forming a spiral. Similarly, it is collaborative because self-critical communities are created where the researcher does not carry out his work externally, but rather with and for society, because it is developed in a group of people with the aim of improving reality. It is also necessary to emphasise in the participants a relationship of equals called emancipatory.

It is essential that the process is oriented towards praxis, i.e. reflective and transformative practice, because it allows to induce the construction of theories and for that, it is previously required to carry out a test on practices, ideas or assumptions, which should be recorded in a diary, in evidence and audio recordings; collect and analyse considering not only the data but also our own judgments and impressions of what happens.

Similarly, Zuber-Sceritt (1992) cited by (Latorre, 2005, p. 25) expresses ideas that highlight that practice not only contributes to the theoretical aspect, but also benefits its improvement during and after the process. Regarding what is investigated, it is not based on the right or wrong answers, but on something beyond that, that is, on the solutions from the points of view by emphasising interpretation.

In terms of analysis, it is made clear that in this research the critical perspective is taken up again, because these are changes that affect people, i.e. society; political processes are determined and progressively the changes will be broader because they start with small cycles of planning, action, observation and reflection, expanding further both in the problem and in the number of collaborators. Likewise, it is necessary to act as critical and self-critical change agents of the given constraints for the improvement of practice.

As the purpose of action research focused on education is the improvement of teaching through the description of activities carried out by the teacher in the classroom, in this case the aim is the use of a proposal to solve the problem of reading comprehension, through reflections made from the interpretations of the data obtained to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposal.

The intervention proposal will be carried out in the Primary School 'María Guadalupe Castorena de Belaunzarán' in the municipality of Ojocaliente, Zacatecas, with 3rd grade students, with the aim of solving the problem, which is manifested in underdeveloped levels. For this reason, the activities proposed are focused on the use of prediction, sampling and inference strategies and modalities of shared and commented reading, using the story as the main resource, due to the fact that this type of narrative text attracts their attention and there is no better way to generate reading comprehension based on their tastes in order to generate a habit of this practice.

Results

Reading strategies

Readers use strategies to decode the message and therefore understand the texts, because the strategies allow us to guide the selection of information to find answers to what we are looking for according to the purposes of reading, they also allow us to affirm or correct the mental schemes set out at the beginning; (Solé, 1998, p. 59), conceptualises them as 'procedures of a high character, which imply the presence of objectives to fulfil, the planning of the actions that are triggered to achieve them, as well as their evaluation and possible change'.

The appropriation of reading strategies does not happen immediately, but requires a process to learn and develop them, therefore, it is necessary for children to explore and use them little by little with the help of teacher guidance until they can execute them in an autonomous and effective way.

Prediction consists of anticipating the contents of the text, formulating hypotheses of what will appear in the future in the stories, whether in the development, at the end or even at the beginning (when the strategy is applied before reading). However, it is closely related to sampling, since according to the authors (Quiñónez & Echeverría, 2012, p. 13) 'the reader is able to make predictions when he/she joins sampling with information', that is, if he/she is not provided with information regarding the content of the text, he/she will not be able to formulate hypotheses.

In the development of the intervention in the application of strategies to improve reading comprehension, the context that was given was the case of a girl called Lupita who wanted to have a pet, but did not know which one to choose because she was first interested in knowing what rabbits are like in order to determine her decision. This opened an exploration of prior knowledge in which the pupils were introduced to the characteristics of rabbits. Then a cardboard bunny was presented, from which the sentence 'Hello, I am a rabbit, you will know my name later, now I will tell you my story,' was given, which promoted the act of reading, and so they did it aloud. The implementation of the material allowed the students to get closer to the character, the subject on which the story revolved, and also opened up the application of prediction with the help of sampling, which is demonstrated by the following evidence of a fragment of the class that was applied:

Ma: Now I will tell you the story of this little rabbit. Look, in the story I am going to tell you, there is the word bunny and there is also the word evil, what do you think the story is about?

Ao: About the wicked bunny (Class register)

In this case, the words 'bunny' and 'evil' were used as part of the sampling strategy, since this 'consists of selecting words, images or ideas from the text that function as a clue or signal to predict the content of the text' (Quiñónez & Echeverría, 2012, p. 13).

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Ma: Yes, let's see Brittany, what do you think it's going to be about?

Aa: About a bunny that plays pranks, because I had a bunny that bit me....

Ma: Did the bunny bite you, look how mean that bunny is, does anyone have any other ideas about anything other than what they think it's going to be about?

Ao: A bunny that has an evil friend.

Ma: That could also be it. No one has thought of that one, have they? You Sofi, what do you think of?

Aa: That an evil rabbit does things to him.

Ma: That an evil rabbit does things to another rabbit, right? That's another idea, we already have three different ideas... (Class record)

The above shows that the students had not had a broad approach to the reading strategies, since at the beginning the prediction was limited, but as other students were questioned specifically, they achieved deeper answers, closer to their reality, context and own experience with the type of pet mentioned; such is the case of the student Brittany, who expanded her opinion by telling the group about how her naughty bunny bit her. However, she changed the adjective 'wicked' to 'naughty', i.e. her ability to make predictions is broader than that of the first student, because she did not extract the information literally (explicitly), on the contrary, her comment was inferential since she deduced an implicit meaning in the word 'wicked'.

Likewise, in register 1, it can be seen that the students highlighted the qualifying adjective 'evil', with which they determined what the events would revolve around, although of course, with different inclinations, because one student focused on the existence of a friend of the bunny whose characteristic is evil and another student imagined that the story would be about two characters, one of whom does bad things to the other.

This initial knowledge is of utmost importance because it also guides the level of comprehension to be achieved, because if students are left with only literal predictions, as the first student did, their level of comprehension may be too, and as mentioned by (Cervantes, Pérez, & Alanís, 2017, p. 3) at the literal level, 'the reader recognises the key phrases and words of the text.

It captures what the text says without a very active intervention of the reader's cognitive and intellectual structure', therefore it is required to advance to other more complex levels, because the intervention in reading is not very active, because, on the other hand, what is expected is that children are involved in it. The notions (acquired from experience) that the students have, which they made known as predictions, are closely related to prior knowledge, because according to (Ausubel, Novak and Hanesian, 1983, p. 1), 'the most important factor that influences learning is what the student already knows'.

This was how the initial exploration allowed the second moment where sampling was applied to be more effective, because when identifying at the beginning of the class characteristics about the colour of the rabbits, this was no longer considered when the image of the cover of the story 'Wicked Bunny' by Jeanne Willis was shown.

Ma: Look, this is the cover of the story (cover shown).

Aos: Wicked Bunny (they read the title)....

Ma: What do you think the rabbit is going to be like? ... now looking at the picture, what do you think he's going to be like?

Ao: Bad

Ma: Malo, let's see, Santi, what do you think the rabbit is going to look like?

Aa: With a sweater

Ma: A little sweater, what else...?

Ao: A pair of little boots like a leprechaun and a pansy.

Ao: A little bunny like he doesn't want to share (Class record)

This shows that the exploration of knowledge gives greater effectiveness to the sampling, because the predictions that the students gave about the characteristics of the character, when asked -what do you think the rabbit is going to be like? -, focused on answers according to what they observed on the cover, where they mainly identified the clothes that the character wears, in this case a waistcoat, pants and boots; in the last characteristic (boots) the student implemented an analogy to describe them.

Box 10**Figure 9**

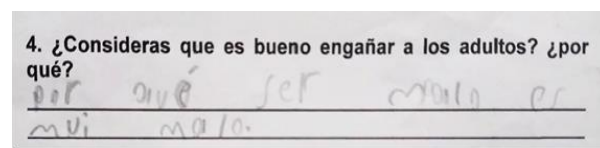
Cover of the story "Wicked Bunny"

Source: Willis, J. Ross, T. (2009)

As shown, the sampling strategy with the implementation of an image (cover), surpassed the initial ideas because it gave way to the presence of broader characteristics of both personality and appearance, with which they were able to identify his way of being as a selfish bunny who does not like to share. Given such effectiveness, the strategy of using words from the story is not left aside, as it gives more scope for the imagination to create an image of the story with the various descriptions of an evil bunny.

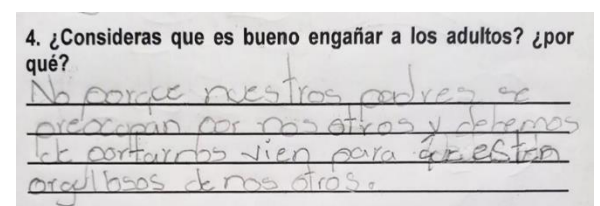
Within this process to generate predictions, the fundamental role played by the exploration of prior knowledge stands out, which means that it is important for the improvement of reading comprehension, due to the fact that "before beginning a reading, it is necessary to activate the knowledge that students have of the subject: in this way it is possible to identify how much they know in order to offer clues that help them to understand the text" (Quiñónez & Echeverría, 2012, p. 12). In this case, the clues provided were through sampling with the selection of words and demonstration of the cover.

In addition to the arguments raised up to this point in the research results, the improvement in reading comprehension with the implementation of reading strategies is confirmed by evidence of the children's work carried out during the development of the session. For example, the following images show answers to the questions: "Do you think it is good to cheat adults? why? whose levels of comprehension are diverse due to the complexity with which they presented their arguments.

Box 11**Figure 10**

Evidence of pupil reading comprehension

Source: Own elaboration

Box 12**Figure 11**

Evidence of pupil reading comprehension

Source: Own elaboration

The evidence in Figure 10 shows that the written sentence only apparently answers the second question 'why?', since there is no 'no' textually, but implicitly answers the first question, because it is understood that it does not consider it good to cheat by identifying that this action is bad.

On the other hand, the answer in Figure 11 is more argued, since the concept 'bad' appears implicitly when explaining the negative consequences that cheating adults would bring, that is, their critical level is more developed, since it is defined as the ability where 'the reader is able to make a value judgement about the text read' (Ramírez & Fernández, 2022, p. 492), which the student did when he/she read the text (Ramírez & Fernández, 2022, p. 492). 492), which the student in Figure 11 did by making a judgement about what Evil did to the bunny by exposing the consequences in general about how the parents worry about this act and even proposes a good behaviour for them to feel proud of, and although he does not specifically mention the character, it is necessary to highlight that this was the one who set an example of deceit.

The development of the critical level in Figure 11 is surprising, as it requires a complex process to reach this level. It should also be noted that the critical level is reflected in both ideas, as they allude to the 'evil' characteristic of the bunny in order to respond that deceiving adults as the evil bunny did in the story is bad.

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The above shows that they made use of the predictions to make critical reflections on the reading and what they experienced in their reality by relating it to their context, i.e., it contributed to the advancement of the critical level. Its importance is highlighted because the predictions made before and during the reading allowed them to get to know the character better. However, if these reading strategies were otherwise lacking, answers such as the above would probably not have been obtained because the main qualitative characteristic of the main character would not be highlighted.

In reading, it is necessary to look beyond what is obvious to the eye, because texts conceal meanings that are valuable for comprehension, although, of course, not only written texts but also visual texts such as images. In order to discover the message of written texts, it is essential to apply the inference strategy, whose objective is to favour the ability to establish conclusions from initial ideas, 'reconstruct the meaning of the text relating it to personal experiences and previous knowledge, and from this formulate conjectures and hypotheses and draw conclusions' (Guerrero, 2024, p. 3).

In the application of the proposal to advance reading comprehension, the reading of the story 'How to catch a star' by Oliver Jeffers was carried out, the end of which opened the inference strategy with the guidance of questions and the support of the images of the story. In the first moment where the inference was executed, the image was shown where the character waits seated in different ways, for this the interest of the students was captured by mentioning that in the story there was something that caught their attention in order to generate curiosity. Once the students were interested, we went through the different places to show the image so that everyone could identify aspects that were not explicit in the text.

Below is the excerpt from the class where the students presented aspects they perceived in the image shown, ranging from facial expressions, movement of body parts and even the tones of the Figures.

Ma: Look here, if you notice that the boy has a face (pointing to the page) and here he has changed his face, hasn't he?

AAos: Let's see, teacher

Ma: Here it has a shape, and here it's like it changed.

/The teacher moves to the places to show the image/ Ma: Did he change? It's like something changed

Aa: Yes, his face has changed Aa: No, yes, yes, it has changed Ma: What has changed?

Ao: And his hands, he had them here Ma: What else did he change?

Aaos: The face

Ma: How did it change? Rosário: From happy to sad

Ma: Rosario says it changed him from happy to sad.

Ao: The colours changed a little bit (Classroom register)

With the first questioning, it was expected that they would say how he had changed, but they continued the participations that focused on other aspects that they perceived, therefore, the initial ideas were taken up again and as a consequence an accurate and essential inference was obtained from a student, who identified that the character went from being happy to being sad, that is to say, she identified the emotions of the characters.

Listening to this type of comments like the one made by the pupil, allows all the children to appropriate these ideas, to advance in their observation skills and to achieve a better understanding of the texts by using the visual resources provided, because sometimes, images say more than words, due to the fact that at no time was it mentioned in the story that the boy was sad, but by observing that first he had a smile on his face as a symbol of happiness and then he changed to a sad face, conclusions were drawn that allow for a better understanding of the story.

This highlights the ideas of the authors (Quiñonez & Echeverría, 2012, p. 13) who mention that inference 'is the strategy by which what is not clearly expressed in a text is inferred.

For example: data about characters, objects, values, author's preferences, among other aspects'. In this case, emphasis was placed on the data about the main character, which not only covered his emotions, but also the change in the position of his hands.

When comparing what the students mentioned and what is shown in the story (Figure 12), the child did indeed move his hands (class record) from being relaxed to tired, and his face was happy and then sad, i.e. some of them did manage to use this strategy and identify important aspects of the character.

Box 13



Esperó, Esperó,



Figure 12

Image for inference strategy

Source: Jeffers, O. (2005)

On the other hand, it should be noted that one pupil mentioned the transformation of the colours, because the landscape changed from light to darker tones. This shows that time has passed, because in the first image the presence of light determining the impact of the sun can be perceived, and in the second Figure on the same page it was possible to hypothesise that it was getting darker. Also, if the image is analysed more closely, it can be seen that the shapes of the shadows are also different, although at first glance they appear to be the same image.

The pupil did not reach these conclusions and only observed the different shades, but the progress he made in identifying this change, which the others did not perceive because they focused only on analysing the character, is highlighted. The small comment made by the child, although it may seem insignificant, has a great impact on his classmates, so that little by little they will analyse the visual resources provided by the texts in greater depth and therefore their level of comprehension will advance. After clarifying the differences between each image, they were asked what the transformation of the character's mood meant to them; it was expected that the pupil would infer that this change was due to the fact that the child was tired of waiting, but what was surprising was that another possible hypothesis arose, believing that perhaps he was hungry, since in the following image the child was happy because he was eating.

Box 14



Figure 13

Evidence of visual hypothesis.

Source: Jeffers, O. (2005)

In this way, the visual reference had a great impact, because through inference it allowed the identification of the emotions of the characters, which is fundamental to better understand the events, to find the meaning that the author wants to convey and therefore to advance in the levels of reading comprehension. At another point, the image was presented where the boy in the story tries to catch the star by throwing a lifebelt, and a comparison was made with the act followed on the next page, which represents that the boy was unable to throw the star and therefore, this tool was without its objective.

It was verified that the students arrived at the inference alluding to the impossibility of catching the star with the lifebuoy, whose ideas were strengthened with the arguments given with hypotheses raised about possible reasons why he did not manage to reach his objective. Because on the first page the star appears trapped in the lifebuoy and on the second page it is not in the lifebuoy, this was presented as aspects of the story that are relevant for them to find an answer to the question: why is the star not in the lifebuoy?

The children's answers to the questioning were diverse, i.e. no pupil mentioned agreeing with any of their classmates. In the following excerpt from the class, it is presented textually how the strategy was carried out and ideas are highlighted that show that they reached a level of inferential comprehension, since, with his observation, a student determined that the character could not catch the star because it was far from his reach, that is, he gave a hypothesis according to his knowledge, because according to his reality, the stars are distant.

Ma: If he tried to throw it here (points to the first image), why isn't the star in the lifebuoy (points to the second image)?

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Article

Iker: Because it wasn't enough, the star is too big.

Ma: Why do you think the lifebuoy is like this without the star? Mateo

Mateo: Because it illuminated a lot

Ma: And since it was shining, what happened...?

Sofía: Because maybe the one in the middle was too big and the lifebuoy could have slipped off (Class record).

As mentioned in previous paragraphs, Guerrero (2024) conceptualises the strategy of inference, whose effectiveness requires the reconstruction of meaning from personal experiences. In this situation, the students hypothesised according to what they know both about the stars and the dimensions of the life preserver related to what they observed, since Sofía's idea referred to the possibility that the star had fallen due to the hole in the life preserver, which, being of a large size, could have caused it to slide down until it returned to the child.

The effectiveness of the strategy was enhanced by the use of a counterexample at another point in the application, in which, through the image of the final part of the story, the question was asked as to why the child raised his hands. The students responded to this doubt about what was observed, but was not textually written in the story; among their answers it stood out that the boy raised his hands because he was finally able to get his star.

Although his inference was correct, this was not affirmed, but a counterexample was given, so that they could develop the ability to argue to check the level of understanding achieved. In the following excerpt from the class register, it is evident that the level reached was inferential, because the arguments put forward to validate their answer were based on what they observed, because as they identified that the child's face conveyed happiness and emotion, he could not have raised his hands as a symbol of fear as stated in the counterexample, which gave strength and validity to their hypotheses.

Ma: Here the child raised his hands, look (shows the image), why did he do it, Rosário

Rosario: Because he could get the star

Ma: Yes, I thought he was scared, you can see that when you are scared you do Ahh!

Sofi: But he's smiling Abigail: Excited

Aa: Because he finally got the star....

Ma: So the emotion he's showing isn't one of fear?

Aaos: Noo

Aa: For finding the star (Class register)

The dialogues in the register show how the 3rd grade students made progress in the application of the strategy, because their arguments about their answer are based on inferences made through observation and detailed analysis of the Figure and in this case focused mainly on what it confers on the character.

Reading comprehension and text production are closely related, because according to (Montenegro, 2018, p. 2) 'reading comprehension and text production are processes that go hand in hand and evidence the development of qualities and competences'. This opens the way for the analysis of the texts produced by the children in which they express the level of reading comprehension achieved.

As we know, there is heterogeneity in a classroom, and for this reason the texts are diverse, some more developed than others, as in the case of the pupil in Figure 14, who decided not to use the images for support. On the other hand, there is the production of a pupil who has difficulties in reading and constructing texts, but despite this he was able to make inferences about the images provided to create his story, although this was presented in three lists of some ideas that highlight three events in his story: the first talks about the boy Juan, who went out into the street to see if he could catch the star, then it is mentioned that he looked out of the window and finally reached space in a rocket (Figure 15).

Box 15

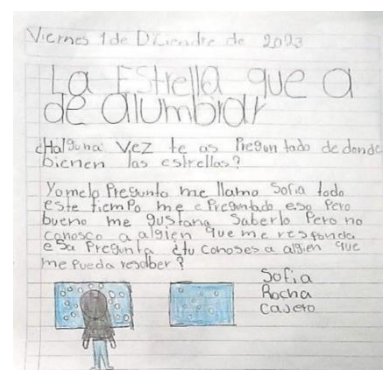


Figure 14

Evidence 1 of inference

Source: Own elaboration

Box 16



Figure 15

Evidence 2 of inference

Source: Own elaboration

The implementation of the strategy generated progress in both types of production, as well as motivating those students who find it more difficult to carry out the reading and writing process.

Reading has a different value for each reader, for some it tends to be boring and boring, for others it becomes a way to travel to incomparable adventures, but these differences are found in the way reading is presented to the children. For example, let's suppose that a text, in this case a story, is a dish, and tasting it always in the same way and with the same ingredients tends to take away the desire to continue tasting it, so it is important to vary the way it is presented, for example, from being the main course to being the dessert, and why not, try something new such as changing ingredients. The same happens with reading, it is necessary to change the way in which we read to children, such as varying the inflection of voice and face, that is to say, changing reading modalities.

According to (Castro, 2009), reading modalities are conceptualised as the different ways in which reading can be done. They are used when we want to make reading more varied and interesting. They encourage different types of participation and different reading strategies in children, which makes it possible to encourage, mediate and promote reading.

The shared modality represents the pleasure of reading, because it allows the appearance of a more explicit art, because it is known that reading in itself is art, but with this modality it becomes more present from the tools of orality and musicality, because according to (Jiménez, 2007, pp. 23-24) in shared reading:

The teacher reads the text or explains to the children the theme of the text so that they know beforehand what they are going to read [...] shares with the children by asking questions that allow them to locate the key words and the central theme of the text. The children will intervene by recognising the words they have managed to identify [...] they correct each other, they learn from their classmates, it is sharing knowledge, it is sharing their reading skills, with this same reading, dramatisations can be made and the accompaniment of songs, it brings into play the creativity of the teachers at the moment it is executed.

In the teaching intervention, it is specifically analysed how it was carried out with dramatisation and musical accompaniment, as a way of reading to the pupils and with which they were able to share their reading skills about how they appropriated this modality. We chose to improve reading comprehension in this way, because the main thing that should be generated in children is the interest to perform this act and what better than with this proposal, because with the passage of time develops the need and autonomy to read.

Reading goes beyond putting letters together to find the words of the texts, it is about transmitting a message, opening the sensibility with the emphasis of the stories and allowing the listener to connect in order to improve reading comprehension. One way to create this connection is through dramatised reading, which, according to (Reyzábal, 2023, p. 1)

[...] is one in which all the expressiveness of a text is reproduced with the voice -and with the body language that usually accompanies it-: the emotions, the texture of the words, the cadence with which a story is told or the variations in intensity with which a reflection is expressed, among others.

In the reading of the story Evil Bunny, the modality used was shared with dramatisation, in which voice and facial inflections were performed, and the voice was modulated. The moments where the dramatisation was performed with greater force left an impact on the children that allowed them to better understand the story.

With intonation appropriate to the expression between exclamation marks - 'Of course they want to know' - voice modulation was applied to the word 'of course'. (Lezman, 2022, p. 2) mentions that it occurs when you control or adjust your voice and conceptualises it as: 'It's when you choose to go louder or softer, faster or slower, dramatic or emotional. Basically, voice modulation means using voice and tone to communicate a message more effectively'.

In this case, the speed at which the word was read was modified by saying it slower and lengthening it, so that it went from being heard as 'clear' to 'claaaar'.

On the other hand, voice inflection was used in the sentence -They put rabbit poo in his chocolate cereal-, raising the voice when mentioning the word 'poo', so that the pupils were surprised by such mischief and put themselves in the farmer's place, as rabbit poo can generate disgust, and the intention was also for them to identify this unpleasant emotion. This was carried out in this way, because with respect to what the author mentions (Jiménez, 2022, p. 1) 'inflection is the elevation or attenuation of the voice, in each sentence and allows you to transmit full attention'.

With the application of these strategies mentioned for dramatisation, it favoured the understanding of the story, since at the end of the sentence all the children laughed because of what the evil bunny did. This means that they understood the action and did not judge because they felt identified with it, as children are usually characterised by being naughty. On the other hand, the absence of laughter would call comprehension into question, since one of the functions of reading is the transmission of emotions, and therefore, in such a situation, for obvious reasons, the emotion that the reader can express is joy, laughter or disgust.

(Giraldo & Rojas, 2017, p. 37) mention that with dramatisation 'students are encouraged to deepen their understanding of the content of texts and their comprehension of them'. Thus, within the classroom it generated that the students understood the story and mainly retained the event of the farmer in their memory.

This underlines the importance of dramatisation.

Reading is enriched by the different ideas that arise from the different worlds that can be entered by knowing what is in the mind of the other; this is favoured by the shared modality. In this modality 'students read a literary text which they then comment on through a conversation guided by the teacher' (SEP, 2022, p. s/p). It should be noted that comments can be made during or after reading. As far as the research is concerned, the students did not read the text on their own, but rather it was read by the teacher, and at certain times a space was opened up for commenting on the stories read.

The dynamic for exploring the ideas of the students was through didactic material, since at that moment it was very useful to use two dice, a common one to select the student with respect to the number of points he/she showed after throwing, and another one in which there were the questions that guided the comments, some more superficial and others more profound and critical.

In the class register below regarding the question 'What did Evil Bunny try to hide?', literal answers were obtained, since the information to answer it is explicit because it is found in the story.

Ma: ... What did Evil Bunny try to hide with his story... don't you remember? Let's see Paola, what did he try to hide? let's see tell me

Paola: A report to his parents...

Ma: Anyone else want to comment?

Ao: The report (Class Record)

Asking this type of question did not generate deep comments, but it allowed developing the capacities to retain information, which is important because according to (Silva, 2011, p. p. s/p): To allow attention to the comprehension of a text it is necessary to free up memory and attention resources occupied in inferior processes such as decoding, therefore it will be necessary to automate word recognition and the use of comprehension strategies.

Reading comprehension progressed with the recognition of the word 'report', which they not only remembered as a fundamental part of the story of the bunny, but also related to their experiences, this is because being immersed in an educational environment they felt familiar because the delivery of report cards to their families is part of their daily life.

This is what gives true meaning to the readings, because comprehension is achieved when the content of the texts become part of the reader.

Comments on a text can be expressed in writing or orally to demonstrate comprehension, but this slogan in the face of profound questions such as ‘if you ever receive a bad grade, how should you act?’ the following excerpt shows what the students thought about the question:

Ma: If you ever get a bad grade, how should you act?

Matthew: By telling my parents.

Ma: Someone else, how would you act?

Aa: We shouldn't act because lying is bad.

Ma: Then you shouldn't lie, you wouldn't lie, would you Abigail? Aa: I would face the consequences

Ma: You would face them, would you Iker?

Ao: Be honest (Class register)

With their oral expressions, the critical level was present, where they reflected their values with their ideas, because in all the comments they identified what is ethically correct, that is, they consider that it is not good to lie, on the contrary, they should be honest and face the consequences of their actions; these ideas show a great level of maturity and the meaning that the reading left in them despite being literary texts where fiction abounds. The implementation of this modality brought great benefits, demonstrating its importance in advancing the levels of reading comprehension; this gives strength to the idea of (Farías, 2023, p. s/p) who mentions that ‘the importance of text commentary lies in the fact that it encourages readers to put their critical sense to the test when they approach a literary work’.

Colorín Colorado. The Conclusions of the reading journey

Thus, the reading adventure concluded with a significant imprint on the students, since the progress obtained in the problem of reading comprehension was notorious, due to the fact that their literal level was strengthened because they advanced in the recovery of explicit information in a quick way, favouring the development of memory.

On the other hand, in the previous diagnosis it was identified that the most developed level was the inferential level, which advanced with the proposed activities, because their inferences showed greater analysis of the images through observation, related to the events of the story.

Regarding the levels of comprehension, the evolution of the students' critical comments was surprising, as they went from being limited to being fluent, with coherence and critical meaning.

Finally, the way of appropriating the reading modalities proved the taste and learning to broaden the ways of interacting with stories, tales, etc. They also demonstrated that their imagination has no limits, an important factor in understanding the texts and immersing themselves in the adventure in search of reading comprehension.

Declarations

Conflict of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest. They have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that might have appeared to influence the article reported in this paper.

Authors' Contribution

Hernández-Gutiérrez, Francisco Javier: He contributed to the final drafting of the entire article, meaningfully constructed each of the article's sections, checked the writing with the relevant formatting, coherence and cohesion.

Mauricio-Rodríguez, Estrella Jatziri: Contributed to the planning and execution of the research project, pre-wrote the general document.

Lizarde-Flores, Eugenio: Contributed to the revision of the theoretical framework, as well as making contributions on significant authors related to the topic of study.

Reyes-Camacho, Ana María: Contributed to the revision and specification of the methodological route of the research, as well as helping with a general revision of the final document for publication.

Article

Availability of data and materials

The images of evidence presented in this research article are the product of the authors' own elaboration, they are images observed and obtained from the research itself, from work, responses and concrete activities of the proposed intervention carried out, as well as from non-profit images and only for research and informative purposes from two children's books: "Wicked Bunny" and "How to catch a star".

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Abbreviations

Aa	Student
Ao	Student
Aos	Students
Gral.	General
Ma	Teacher
OCDE	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SEP	Ministry of Public Education

References**Background**

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